

JFK panel moves to analyze film

The Washington Bureau of The News

WASHINGTON — The House Assassinations Committee obtained possession this week of a newly discovered film of the Kennedy assassination and has taken steps to determine if the film shows a second person in the gunman window of the Texas School Book Depository.

Sources familiar with the investigation said the panel obtained the film from former Dallas resident Charles Bronson earlier this week and turned it over to a private laboratory for scrutiny. The sources refused to reveal the laboratory's name, in keeping with the tight security that has surrounded the assassinations committee's investigation.

Critics of the Warren Commission's findings that a lone assassin — Lee Harvey Oswald — fired the fatal shots that killed the president say the film is the "most important new evidence in 15 years" to support their theory that Kennedy's death was the result of a conspiracy.

THE FILM, taken minutes before Kennedy's death in 1963 by amateur cameraman Bronson, was first revealed publicly in The Dallas News

Sunday. A close examination of the film shows a blurred image in the 6th-floor window from which the shots are said to have been fired.

Earlier this week, the committee Chairman Louis Stokes, D-Ohio, said the panel would look at the film, but he said it is out of time and money and that it is unclear if the panel could pay for a sophisticated computer analysis of it.

The source cautioned that the committee's looking at the film does not mean it is accepting it as evidence of a conspiracy theory. However, he said the panel is "covering all its bases."

Established two years ago by congress, the special committee was mandated to investigate thoroughly the deaths of Kennedy and civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

In conclusions — idealistically — were expected to quash rumors about the slayings and to answer questions raised over whether the FBI and the Central Intelligence Agency adequately discharged their duties in their investigations of the murders.

The committee, which expires Dec. 31, has not reached a formal conclusion on the Kennedy investigation, but it appeared to be heading toward accepting the Warren Commission conclusion that Oswald alone was responsible for the death.

THE SOURCES said that what the committee is having done with the film is "a first step" and similar to the enhancement The News commissioned film technician Robert Groden to do before printing stories about it last week.

Groden, of Hope Lawn, N.J., enhanced the film through blowups that allowed detailed examination of the images on it.

The sources said that "there are limits to what you can do with film in a laboratory, and you can't keep blowing it up forever." However, if the film is subjected to a computer analysis that involves digital processing, the source said, "it can show tremendous amounts of new information."

WHAT THE COMMITTEE wants to find out, before it goes to the second more costly step, is if more information would be revealed.

The Bronson film shows a blurry figure in the 6th-floor window on close examination and contains frames of the shot hitting the president.

The committee staff has been extremely close-mouthed about the Bronson film.

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